

LAND MEASUREMENTS PORTAL TRENDS


This document authored by the Office of Science and Technology report, provides several program recommendations with regard to moderate resolution imagery.

U.S. National Land Imaging Program

The following excerpt is taken from the [National Land Imaging Program document](#):

The United States relies on moderate-resolution land imaging for a wide variety of critical observations of the global land surface. The United States has long maintained scientific, technological, and policy leadership in satellite-based land remote sensing for the benefit of the United States and other nations, and this leadership has manifested itself as high-resolution imagery systems that benefit national security and many U.S. commercial purposes, moderate-resolution systems that benefit society in more general but vital ways, and low resolution systems, originally designed for weather satellites, that can reveal certain characteristics of the Earth over very broad areas. Benefits of a continuous global record of moderate-resolution land imaging include the management of U.S. lands and territorial possessions, domestic agriculture and natural resources, monitoring global change, national security, and other aspects of general U.S. economic welfare. These benefits have been amply validated since the early 1970s by the success of the Landsat satellite series.

While U.S. policies have led to robust and growing markets for high-resolution aerial and satellite land imaging, attempts to foster the commercial development of moderate-resolution satellites have not succeeded. Furthermore, no single Federal agency currently has the responsibility for meeting the Nation's need for operational moderate resolution data.¹ The United States is developing a plan to maintain its scientific and technological leadership role in this area beyond the end of the current decade.



It is proposed that the United States establish a National Land Imaging Program led by the U.S. Department of the Interior to ensure that U.S. land imaging needs are met in the future and to maintain U.S. leadership in civil land imaging and land science, including the development and operation of U.S.-owned operational space assets dedicated to civil land imaging purposes, and that the U.S. pursue a strategy of collaborating with its international partners and other U.S. and foreign commercial entities to augment U.S. capabilities to the level required to meet U.S. operational needs.

The Office of Science and Technology report also provides several program recommendations with regard to moderate resolution imagery:

Recommendation #1: The U.S. must commit to continue the collection of moderate-resolution land imagery.

Recommendation #2: The United States should establish and maintain a core operational capability to collect moderate-resolution land imagery through the procurement and launch of a series of U.S.-owned satellites.

Recommendation #3: The United States should establish the National Land Imaging Program, hosted and managed by the Department of the Interior, to meet U.S. civil land imaging needs.